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Global Food Security: In Our National Interest

David P. Lambert

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GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY: IN OUR NATIONAL INTEREST*

*David P. Lambert***

| | | |
|------|---|-----|
| I. | INTRODUCTION | 99 |
| II. | THE PROBLEM OF GLOBAL HUNGER: GLOBAL STRESS POINTS . | 100 |
| | A. <i>Populations</i> | 101 |
| | B. <i>Climate Change</i> | 103 |
| | C. <i>Water</i> | 104 |
| III. | SOLUTIONS | 106 |
| | A. <i>Encourage Good Governance</i> | 106 |
| | B. <i>Support for Agricultural Research</i> | 108 |
| | C. <i>Prioritize Early Child Nutrition</i> | 108 |
| | D. <i>Educate Girls</i> | 109 |
| | E. <i>Empower Women</i> | 109 |
| | F. <i>Promote Sustainable Practices in the Private Sector</i> | 110 |
| | G. <i>Give Food Security Issues a Human Face</i> | 110 |

I. INTRODUCTION

All Americans have a direct stake in the problem of global hunger, which has many dimensions. For most of us it is a profound moral issue, and we are guided by our faith to respond.

Beyond that, however, global hunger also presents a serious national security threat. In 2002, President Bush acknowledged this in his National Security Strategy. “A world where some live in comfort and plenty, while half of the human race lives on less than \$2 a day, is neither just nor stable. Including all of the world’s poor in an expanding circle of development –

* This article is based on a combination of two lectures delivered by the author, *Investing in Global Food Security: Where is the Return*, a World Food Prize Lecture given in Des Moines, Iowa on October 12, 2011, and *Securing Global Food Security with Sustainability*, delivered at the Farm Journal Forum in Washington, D.C. on December 6, 2011.

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and opportunity – is a moral imperative and one of the top priorities of US international policy.”¹

Americans are beginning to understand that food insecurity affects global political stability, and this affects our trade markets, our investment climate, and our retirement accounts.

II. The Problem of Global Hunger: Global Stress Points

Consider these startling statistics:

- Hunger kills more people than AIDS, Malaria, TB combined;²
- There are more hungry people in the world than the combined populations of the United States, Canada, and the European Union;³
- Approximately 25,000 people die each day of hunger;⁴
- Nearly 1 billion will go to bed hungry tonight (1/7 of the world);⁵
- A child dies of hunger every 5 seconds;⁶
- 180 million children are “stunted” – will never have a normal life, and are at dramatically increased risk from infectious disease due to malnourishment;⁷
- 19 million children are severely wasted – low weight for height proportions;⁸
- Diarrheal deaths kill an estimated 1.5 million children annually; most are caused by contaminated food or water.⁹

1. George W. Bush, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (Sept. 17, 2002) <http://www.informationclearinghouse.info/article2320.htm>.

2. *Hunger Statistics*, WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME, <http://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats> (last visited May 2, 2012).

3. *Id.*

4. *Hunger and World Poverty*, POVERTY.COM, <http://poverty.com/> (last visited May 2, 2012).

5. *Hunger Statistics*, WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME, <http://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats> (last visited May 2, 2012).

6. *Global Hunger*, BREAD FOR THE WORLD, <http://www.bread.org/hunger/global/> (last visited May 2, 2012).

7. Anthony Lake, Executive Director, UNICEF, Address at the High Level Meeting on Nutrition, N.Y., N.Y. (Sept. 20, 2011), http://www.unicef.org/media/media_59871.html.

8. *The Lancet: Series on Maternal and Child Undernutrition, Executive Summary*, 1, available at <http://www-tc.iaea.org/tcweb/abouttc/tcseminar/Sem6-ExeSum.pdf> (last visited on May 2, 2012).

9. *Hunger Statistics*, WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME, available at <http://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats> (last visited May 2, 2012).

Three global stress points point toward the potential for even greater problems in the future, unless preventative action is taken now. These stress points are the expanding population, climate change, and the availability of water.

A. Population

Any discussion of global food security stress points would perhaps best begin with the work of economist Thomas Malthus about 200 years ago. Malthus theorized that food production could only increase gradually (largely because of limitations of land) while population could rise exponentially. He concluded that since population would outpace food production hunger and famine were inevitable.¹⁰

We know of course that Malthus so far has been profoundly wrong. Why? He could not have envisioned that our progress in sustainable agricultural practices, new technologies, and increased productivity would defeat his theory. As Howard Buffet noted, “[i]n 1940, one U.S. farmer produced enough to feed 19 people, today they produce enough to feed 155 each year.”¹¹

However, given current population projections, coupled with global food demands, some informed observers say that Malthus is still lurking.

We are all familiar with the projection that a 70% increase in food production will be required to support our population jump from 7 billion to over 9 billion by the year 2050.¹² As Bob Thompson reminds us – that is the population equivalent of adding two more Chinas to this planet.¹³

10. Reverend Thomas Robert Malthus, *AN ESSAY ON THE PRINCIPLE OF POPULATION* (1798).

11. Howard G. Buffet, *Howard Buffett: We Can't Afford To Lose Fight Against Hunger*, DES MOINES REGISTER (July 3, 2011), available at <http://www.thehowardgbuffettfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/We-Cant-Afford-to-Lose-DSM.pdf>. Buffet is an American philanthropist, photographer, conservationist, author, and farmer. See <http://www.thehowardgbuffettfoundation.org/about-hgbf/about-the-president>. He serves as President of the Howard G. Buffett Foundation, a private foundation that “works to improve the standard of living and quality of life for the world’s most impoverished and marginalized populations.” See, <http://www.thehowardgbuffettfoundation.org/>. The foundation’s “primary funding areas are agricultural resource development for smallholder and subsistence farmers and clean water delivery to vulnerable communities in Africa and Central America.” See *id.*

12. U.N. Food & Agric. Org. (FAO), *How to Feed the World in 2050*, 2 (2011) available at http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/templates/wsfs/docs/expert_paper/How_to_Feed_the_World_in_2050.pdf.

13. Carey Gillam, *Extra Billions Can Be Fed, But Who Will Pay?* (Oct. 25, 2011) (quoting Robert Thompson), available at <http://af.reuters.com/article/worldNews/>

However, it is not the number of 9 billion that is the principal concern. The numbers inside the 9 billion – that is where the alarm bells are. Consider the following facts that describe our demographically divided world and reveal the “ticking time bombs.”

Two places on the planet are losing population: Japan and Eastern Europe – because of lower fertility rates and low inward migration. Western Europe would be losing population but for migration from the south. The Western Hemisphere is growing, but just gradually.¹⁴ Even China – at 1.3 billion – will begin to decline within two decades (their concern eventually may be having enough labor to harvest their crops).¹⁵

In contrast, India – with 1.2 billion – will zoom past China, reaching 1.7 billion by 2050, principally due to discrimination against women, bad governance, and social traditions. So, India – which currently has 42% of all child malnutrition in the world – is a major concern going forward.¹⁶

As, of course, is Africa, a continent that has rocketed from 611 million in 2000 to 800 million today – in only one decade. With data from the Population Reference Bureau, here are three of the most alarming examples of countries expected to experience deepening food security crises:

- East Africa’s Uganda, now 32 million and the size of Oregon, will reach 105.6 million by 2050; i.e., its population will more than triple in 40 years;¹⁷

idAFTRE79O71G20111025?sp=true. Robert Thompson is a Visiting Scholar at the John Hopkins University Nitze School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS) and serves on the International Food & Agricultural Trade Policy Council and is former director of rural development for the World Bank. See <http://www.sais-jhu.edu/pressroom/experts/faculty/t/thompson.htm>.

14. See, U.S. Census Bureau, International Programs, International Database, <http://www.census.gov/population/international/data/idb/informationGateway.php> (last visited May 2, 2012); see also, Claire Suddath, *Census Update: What the World Will Look like in 2050*, TIME MAGAZINE (June 30, 2011), available at <http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,2080404,00.html>; U.N., Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division, *World Populations Prospects: The 2010 Revision*, available at http://esa.un.org/unpd/wpp/Documentation/pdf/WPP2010_Highlights.pdf.

15. See, Michael Wines & Sharon Lafraniere, *New Census Finds China’s Population Growth Has Slowed*, N.Y. TIMES (Apr. 28, 2011) available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/29/world/asia/29census.html>.

16. *India: On the Path to Replacement-Level Fertility?* POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU, <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2011/world-population-data-sheet/india.aspx> (July 2011).

17. *Uganda: At the Beginning of the Demographic Transition*, POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU, <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2011/world-population-data-sheet/uganda.aspx> (July 2011).

- Nigeria, now at 160 million, is projected to reach 400 million by 2050; it will then equal the population of the U.S., but with only 1/10 of the land;¹⁸
- Ethiopia, with thousands of years of human history reached 10 million at the start of WWII. It is now 85 million, i.e., it has grown 850% in just three generations, and it is rising fast.¹⁹

B. Climate Change

Another global stress point is climate change. There are still some who think that climate change is only a theory. In fact, a recent poll of Midwest farmers reflected that 33% believe climate change is either not occurring, or that there is not sufficient evidence to believe it is occurring.²⁰

Yet in the Midwest each October, the world's top climate scientists go to the World Food Prize in Des Moines and deliver the same consistent message - climate change 1) is real, 2) is here, and 3) its consequences are and will continue to be devastating.²¹

What are those consequences of climate change?

- Higher temperatures, by 2 degrees or more by the end of the century, brought on largely by rising levels of Greenhouse gases (GHGs);
- Rising sea levels;
- Less drinking water;
- Spreading of human diseases, such as malaria;
- Lower crop yields – the Global Crop Diversity Trust concurs with Stanford University's research that climate change will cause a

18. The Population Reference Bureau, *2011 World Population Data Sheet* (July 2011) available at <http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2011/world-population-data-sheet/data-sheet.aspx>.

19. *Id.*, see also, Schuyler Null, *From Ethiopia: "Better Bank for the Buck," With Population, Health and Environment Consortium*, POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU (BEHIND THE NUMBERS) (Mar. 23, 2011) (Noting that "Ethiopia is currently home to 85 million people – second only to Nigeria as the most populated country in Africa – and the average woman has 5.4 children . . .").

20. *Iowa Farm and Rural Life Poll: 2011 Summary Report*, 2 Iowa State Univ. (2011) available at <https://store.extension.iastate.edu/ItemDetail.aspx?ProductID=13717>.

21. See, e.g., Hans Herren, Peg Armstrong-Gustafson, Michael Hansen, Anita Idel, Helena Paul, John Reganol, *Conversation: Agriculture and Climate Change — Being Part of the Solution*, THE 2009 BORLAUG DIALOGUE: FOOD, AGRICULTURE, AND NATIONAL SECURITY IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD, available at http://www.worldfoodprize.org/documents/filelibrary/documents/09highlights_358E5A8062AC9.pdf.

30% decrease in the production of maize, Africa's dominant crop, by 2030;

- New plant diseases and pests – insects already consume 25% of our world's crops;
- Increasingly aberrational weather patterns – droughts and floods;
- Increasing and continuing food price volatility.²²

Cornell's Pinstrup-Andersen projects that food price volatility is here to stay. His analysis: Food price volatility will continue. Why? Because food production volatility will continue. Why? Because of aberrational weather patterns – droughts and floods – brought about by climate change.²³

Incidentally, an observation on the related debate on whether climate change is principally man-made. Most experts say it is, but consider this question. If one suddenly discovered the house was on fire, at that moment does it matter whether it was struck by lightning or whether a child knocked over a candle? Is the challenge not the same? Don't both give rise to the same obligation?

C. Water

The third stress point is water. Most of us assume water will always be there, and as Americans we use about 100 gallons a day in each of our homes.²⁴ However, for global food security analysts water is by far the most troubling of all issues – because of its increasing scarcity, and because it directly determines the availability of food.

The experts in this area urge our greater awareness of global flashpoints, as well as sensitivity to demands for available and safe water. Consider these facts and their relevance in a world with increasing water scarcity.

22. See, Gerald C. Nelson, Mark W. Rosegrant, Jawoo Koo, Richard Robertson, Timothy Sulser, Tingju Zhu, Claudia Ringler, Siwa Msangi, Amanda Palazzo, Miroslav Batka, Marilia Magalhaes, Rowena Valmonte-Santos, Mandy Ewing, and David Lee, *Climate Change: Impact on Agriculture and Costs of Adaptation*, International Food Policy Research Institute (2009).

23. Per Pinstrup-Andersen, *Food Policy in Disarray: The Challenges and Priorities*, International Food Policy Research Institute conference, Washington, D.C. (Nov. 21, 2011), video available at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9Sp-H_CxxQ. See generally, Per Pinstrup-Anderson & Derrill D. Watson II, *FOOD POLICY FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES* (2011).

24. *Drinking Water*, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, available at http://water.epa.gov/learn/kids/drinkingwater/water_trivia_facts.cfm (last visited May 2, 2012).

- Only 2.5% of the earth's water is fresh water (most is frozen),²⁵
- Agriculture and industry use 98% of that fresh water;²⁶
- And, much fresh water is not safe – 1.8 million children aged under five die of dirty water-related diseases (one infant every 20 seconds);²⁷
- World population is today 50% urban and 50% rural; by 2050 we will be 70% urban;²⁸ Want to talk hardball politics – who will get the water?
- By 2025, 1.8 billion people will likely experience absolute water scarcity;²⁹
- An increasing number of the world's rivers are drying up due to over use and climate change, with some never reaching the sea;³⁰
- One liter of water is required to produce 1 calorie of food;³¹

Of course, this issue directly relates back to climate change, which makes water more scarce, especially in tropical regions.³²

25. *Statistics: Graphs & Maps, Water Resources*, U.N., WATER, available at http://www.unwater.org/statistics_res.html (last visited May 2, 2012).

26. *Statistics: Graphs & Maps, Water Use*, U.N., WATER, available at http://www.unwater.org/statistics_use.html (last visited May 2, 2012).

27. Mike Pflanz, *World Water Day: Dirty Water Kills More People Than Violence, Says UN*, THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR (Mar. 22, 2010) (reporting on a conference held in Nairobi, Kenya to “coincide with the annual focus on clean and sustained water supplies for a human population expected to grow by 50 percent in the next four decades” where the UN stated that “more people now die from contaminated and polluted water than from all forms of violence including wars”) available at <http://www.csmonitor.com/World/Africa/2010/0322/World-Water-Day-Dirty-water-kills-more-people-than-violence-says-UN>.

28. Press Release, *Africa And Asia To Lead Urban Population Growth In The Next Four Decades*, U.N. Press Release (Apr. 5, 2011), http://esa.un.org/unpd/wup/pdf/WUP2011_Press-Release.pdf; See also, U.N. EDUCATIONAL SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION (UNESCO), http://www.unwater.org/statistics_urb.html (last visited May 2, 2012).

29. *Water Scarcity*, U.N. WATER, INTERNATIONAL DECADE FOR ACTION, WATER FOR LIFE 2005-2015, <http://www.un.org/waterforlifedecade/scarcity.shtml> (last visited May 2, 2012).

30. Matt McGrath, *World's Major Rivers Drying Up*, BBC NEWS (Apr. 21, 2009) <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/8011497.stm>.

31. *Growing More Food – Using Less Water*, U.N., FOOD & AGRIC. ORG. (FAO), http://www.fao.org/fileadmin/user_upload/newsroom/docs/water_facts.pdf (last visited May 2, 2012).

32. *Statistics: Graphs & Maps, Water & Climate Change*, U.N. WATER, http://www.unwater.org/statistics_clim.html (last visited May 2, 2012).

III. SOLUTIONS

Underpinning our strategies to deal with all of these related global challenges are the Millennium Development Goals.³³ Essentially these goals are a promise made by 189 nations in 2000 to free people from extreme poverty and all other deprivations.³⁴ “Eradicating extreme hunger and poverty” is in fact the first of these eight goals. All countries recommitted to this pledge in 2010.³⁵

Nicholas Kristof says that the eight goals are too complicated for the public to understand and should be simplified. I would not challenge Kristof, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author and New York Times journalist, who commands great respect for his championing of human rights issues. Moreover, he is an expert on the effectiveness of messaging. If he says it is complicated, then it is complicated.

So I have tried to think how we might unpack these eight goals so they are easier to grasp. Just imagine an expectant mother, and the dreams she would have for her daughter. That mother and daughter are healthy. The mother is assured that her daughter will be free of hunger, poverty, and dread diseases. Her daughter will get a good education, in a world free of discrimination. And she will live in a safe and clean environment. Just add “global partnerships” and that’s it! Those are the eight goals.

So what are the policy solutions to deal with the global stress points and the related global food security challenges so that we can meet the dreams of an expectant mother and achieve the Millennium Development Goals? While we already know *what* to do, our real challenge is knowing *how* to do it – that is a true measure of sustainability.

A. Encourage Good Governance

We can work in good faith on many related issues, but the quality of national governance is the heart of the matter. We ask a lot of the U.N., the World Bank, other international institutions, NGOs and the rest of our

33. *Goals and Targets*, MILLENNIUM PROJECT, http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/reports/goals_targets.htm (last visited May 2, 2012); *see also*, *About the Millennium Development Goals: What They Are*, MILLENNIUM PROJECT, <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/index.htm> (last visited May 2, 2012).

34. The original 2000 U.N. Millennium Declaration is available at <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>.

35. Press Release, *U.N. Summit Concludes With Adoption Of Global Action Plan To Achieve Development Goals By 2015*, U.N. Press Release (Sept. 22, 2010), <http://www.un.org/en/mdg/summit2010/pdf/Closing%20press%20release%20FINAL-FINAL%20Rev3.pdf>.

institutions. They are important and should be supported – and collaboration among all of these players should be strengthened.

But in the final analysis there is no substitute for good governance. As Pinstrip-Andersen reminds us: “[b]ad national policies cannot be rectified by good international institutions.” This recognition goes to the essential philosophy underpinning the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the independent U.S. foreign aid agency created by Congress in 2004 to lead the U.S. efforts against global poverty.³⁶

Here are just a few examples of why good governance is so important in people’s lives:

- Consider the Korean Peninsula – The U.N. and others report that children in North Korea are significantly shorter than children in South Korea.³⁷ Moreover, U.S. AID Administrator Shah recently shared a satellite image of the Peninsula at night. South Korea was brightly lighted throughout; North Korea was completely dark.³⁸
- Consider Zimbabwe – As the result of bad governance, average life expectancy has dropped from 60 years to 35 years in just over a single generation.³⁹
- Consider Ghana – By contrast, Ghana has invested in its people and carried out enlightened economic and social policies that will result in its achieving the first Millennium Development Goal of ending poverty and hunger. In recognition, its former president was this year’s co-winner of the World Food Prize.⁴⁰

36. See, MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION, <http://www.mcc.gov/pages/about>.

37. John Thomas Didymus, *North Koreans Shorter Than South Koreans Due To Famine, Poor Diet*, DIGITAL JOURNAL (Apr. 24, 2012) available at <http://digitaljournal.com/article/323549>.

38. Raj Shah, *Delivering Meaningful Results in Global Development*, Transcript of Remarks by Dr. Raj Shah, USAID Administrator, <http://www.usaid.gov/press/speeches/2011/sp110614.html>.

39. Michael Radu, *Left-wing Monster: Robert Mugabe*, FrontPageMagazine.com (March 14, 2006), available at <http://archive.frontpagemag.com/readArticle.aspx?ARTID=5220>.

40. *Hunger-Fighting Former Presidents of Ghana, Brazil Win World Food Prize*, THE WORLD FOOD PRIZE, NEWS (Oct 14, 2011), <http://www.worldfoodprize.org/index.cfm?nodeID=24667&action=display&newsID=15442>.

B. Support for Agricultural Research

Of all the policy responses to alleviate global food insecurity, no set of interventions holds more promise than investment in agricultural science. It is the key to the best answers for our most vexing global challenges.

Biotechnology's potential for Africa in critical areas – drought tolerance, disease resistance, nutrition enhancement – is a prime example of how science can deliver most effectively to those at greatest risk.

Research priorities for USDA, land-grants, and foundations include such critical and diverse problems as global food security, climate change (mitigation and adaptation), bioenergy, child nutrition and obesity, food safety, desalinization of water, and postharvest loss.⁴¹ And yet we have the paradox that this research, with its enormous potential return, continues to be severely underfunded.⁴²

C. Prioritize Early Child Nutrition

The most pivotal issue to insure the success our international development objectives is early child nutrition. We know from our own experience that to have a vibrant and healthy society we must have development. To have development we must have education. There can be little achievement in education without basic child nutrition.

Early child nutrition is the linchpin for everything else we try to achieve in foreign aid policy, and supports all of the UN Millennium Development Goals.⁴³ That is why it is most encouraging that the global community is now giving such focused attention to the 1,000 Days Initiative – the direct recognition that the most critical time in a child's mental and physical development is from conception through the first two years of life.⁴⁴

41. USDA, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, *Program Synopsis: Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) Competitive Grants Program*, available at http://www.nifa.usda.gov/funding/afri/afri_synopsis.html (last visited May 2, 2012).

42. See generally, Pardey, Philip G., Alston, Julian M. Piggot, and Roley R., *AGRICULTURAL R&D IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD: TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE?* (2006) (discussing patterns of public investment in agricultural research and the "pervasive underfunding of agricultural research").

43. UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> (last visited May 2, 2012).

44. THOUSAND DAYS, <http://www.thousanddays.org/> (last visited May 2, 2012).

D. Educate Girls

There is no demographic group in humanity who suffers more entrenched discrimination than young girls in the developing world.⁴⁵ Their wellbeing, particularly their health and education, should be paramount among our international objectives. The staggering condition of malnutrition and illiteracy among the most vulnerable members of our global society is not only a shock to our conscience, it deeply compromises all related goals toward a safer and more stable world.

To be specific, the best answer to the population “stress point” can be summed up in two words: “educate girls.” There is compelling data concluding that this single policy intervention will not only produce marvels in health, poverty reduction, and empowerment, but also it will put this fragile planet on a voluntary downward population path.⁴⁶

E. Empower Women

Again, the issue of opportunity for women goes back to the central importance of national governance. As we think of the wonderful work of “Farmers Feeding the World,” we are reminded of who the majority of the world’s farmers are – they are women.⁴⁷ Incidentally, these women in Africa and Asia walk about 3.7 miles each day to get water.⁴⁸

Yet, in far too many places, women are not allowed to vote, not allowed to inherit property, not allowed to sign contracts, not allowed bank credit, not allowed to serve in their parliaments, and not given the basic benefits of agricultural extension. Women feed the world’s children, but receive less than 5% of technical assistance to agriculture.⁴⁹

45. See, *Violence And Discrimination: Voices Of Young People: Girls About Girls*, UNICEF, (Sept. 2006), http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/elim-disc-viol-girlchild/UNICEFEGM_GirlaboutGirlsFINAL.pdf.

46. See, Melanne Verveer, *Educating Women and Girls Is Key to Meeting 21st Century Demands* (July 1, 2011), <http://iipdigital.usembassy.gov/st/english/publication/2011/06/20110630092138ennalem0.7990185.html#axzz1tk3IRLNa>.

47. See, FAO, *Rural Women And Food Security: Current Situation And Perspectives* (1998), <http://www.fao.org/DOCREP/003/W8376E/w8376e02.htm>.

48. Julie Fisher, *Water, Sanitation and Hygiene: For Her It's the Big Issue - Putting Women At The Centre Of Water Supply, Sanitation And Hygiene*, 19 (citing Blagborough, V., *Looking Back: The long-term impacts of water and sanitation projects*, WaterAid, London (2001)), Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council (2006) available at <http://www.genderandwater.org/page/5124>.

49. Myrna Cunningham Kain, *Role of Institutions in Rural Areas Addressing Women's Needs, With a Focus on Indigenous Women*, (Sept. 2011), <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw56/egm/Cunningham-EP-11-EGM-RW-Sep-2011.pdf>.

F. Promote Sustainable Practices in the Private Sector

The private sector has been called the “last frontier” in the battle for global food security – the needed partner that long has been missing in our collaborative quest to end hunger in our time. Well, that is changing, and it is changing fast.

Many companies have made major investments in global food security and sustainable development. Three specific examples evidence this commitment.

Walmart integrates sustainability goals as a “core part” of their business. CEO Mike Duke is quoted as declaring that “[w]e do not view our sustainability work as a philanthropic add-on to what we do, but as a core part of who we are.”⁵⁰ Walmart’s corporate commitments include:

- Donating \$2 billion in cash and in-kind to fight hunger in America
- Eliminating 20 million tons of GHGs
- Reducing sodium in food by 25%
- Being supplied 100% by renewable energy
- Creating zero waste
- Training 1 million farm workers, half of whom will be women
- Reducing food waste in emerging market stores by 15%
- Intensifying purchases of crops from small and local farmers.⁵¹

PepsiCo is headed by Indra Nooyi, one of the world’s most influential corporate executives. Here is what she says about Pepsi’s strategic partnership with USAID and the UN World Food Program (WFP) to develop chickpea in Ethiopia: “[t]his initiative will positively impact the livelihood of local farmers, address the critical issue of famine in the Horn of Africa and create sustainable business opportunities for PepsiCo.”⁵²

G. Give Food Security Issues a Human Face

My last global stress point “solution” is an appeal to all of us. If we are to get the resources necessary to deal with all of these intractable problems, we must learn to communicate more effectively the ways these policies directly benefit people. We must give these issues a human face.

50. Message From Mike Duke, WALMART 2012 GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY REPORT, http://www.walmartstores.com/sites/ResponsibilityReport/2011/message_mike_duke.aspx.

51. *Id.*

52. Press Release, *USAID, PepsiCo, and World Food Programme Partner to Increase Food Production and Address Malnutrition in Ethiopia*, USAID Press Release (Sept. 21, 2011), <http://www.usaid.gov/press/releases/2011/pr110921.html>.

To get resources, we first must create political will. That cannot happen unless we raise awareness about the glorious story of lives transformed and children delivered from starvation. Just a few examples of my point:

- Food price volatility is not just about speculation in commodities markets, but about the assault on the diets of children when these price spikes mean that their mothers can no longer afford the micronutrient rich foods so critical for early development;
- In using the sanitized term IDP (internally displaced person), Serageldin reminds us that “much economic analysis erases the human factor.”⁵³ How about DHC (desperately hungry children);
- When we talk of climate change, it is true we need to discuss longhorn beetle infestation of forests, nitrous oxide deposits in rivers, and rising sea levels. But what are the consequences of climate change really all about? They are about human suffering and starvation. They are the devastating effects of drought that crush a family’s hope for the future;
- “Golden rice” is often reported as just a new genetic trait or a scientific conquest. That is true, and that is important; but that is not the message to get greater public support. The message is about the 670,000 children each year whose lives might be spared from the agony of vitamin A deficiency and death by “night blindness” and “river blindness” because of fortified rice.⁵⁴

With 150,000 new mouths to feed every day, the world remains a very hungry place: 49 million Americans, including 17 million children;⁵⁵ almost one billion people globally,⁵⁶ with 180 million children stunted;⁵⁷ 25,000 people dying each day – a child every six seconds.⁵⁸

53. Ismail Serageldin, *Feeding the World Sustainably: Reflections, Issues, and Suggestions*, Second Annual Malthus Lecture, IFPRI (July 14, 2011), <http://www.ifpri.org/event/2nd-annual-malthus-lecture>.

54. *Golden Rice: Vitamin A Deficiency*, INTERNATIONAL RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, <http://irri.org/news-events/hot-topics/golden-rice/vitamin-a-deficiency>.

55. Alisha Coleman-Jensen, Mark Nord, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson, *Household Food Security in the United States in 2010*, 16, USDA, Econ. Res. Serv. Rep. No. 125 (Sept. 2011), available at <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/ERR125/ERR125.pdf> (last visited May 2, 2012).

56. *Hunger*, WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME, <http://www.wfp.org/hunger/stats>.

We need answers. We need political will. We need a place at the policy table. We need resources. If we are to change this equation we must tell our story more clearly and understandably. Whether responding to a distressed farmer in Illinois or a starving child in Ethiopia, with food security issues, we must always remember the human face behind the story.

57. Anthony Lake, *The Global Crisis You've Never Heard Of: Stunting*, Time Magazine (Jan. 31, 2012) available at <http://ideas.time.com/2012/01/31/the-global-crisis-youve-never-heard-of/>.

58. See, POVERTY.COM, <http://poverty.com/>; STOP HUNGER NOW, http://www.stophungernow.org/site/PageServer?pagename=learn_facts and *Global Hunger*, BREAD FOR THE WORLD, <http://www.bread.org/hunger/global/> (based on statistics from the U.N. FAO, UNICEF, and World Food Programme).